

NAVAL STATION NEWPORT RESTORATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING JANUARY 20, 1999
MINUTES

On Wednesday, January 20, 1999, the Naval Station Newport Installation Restoration Program Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) gathered at NETC's Officers' Club for its monthly meeting. The meeting began at 7:10 and ended at 9:15.

Ten of the 17 RAB community members attended: Mary Blake, David Brown, Dick Coogan, Gene Love, Tom McGrath, Joseph Mello, John Palmieri, Howard Porter, John Vitkevitch, and Claudette Weissinger. Other RAB members attending were Kymberlee Keckler, EPA Remedial Project Manager; Captain Wyman, the Navy Co- Chair, and Jim Shafer, NORTHDIV's Remedial Project Manager. Warren Angel and Rich Gottlieb from RIDEM represented RAB member Paul Kulpa (who is recovering from a pulled muscle). David Egan, the TAG technical advisor, was present. Dave Peterson (EPA) was present. Dave Dorocz and Melissa Griffin were present from NETC's Environmental Division, as was Pete DuBois, from the Public Affairs Office. Kathy Abbass, Barbara Barrow, Paul Cormier, Tony D'Agnew, Beth Everett, Byron Hall, and Liz Mathinos were not present [no RSVP sheet was created by the Public Affairs Office because no reminder letter was sent].

Captain Wyman, the Navy Co-chair, welcomed the group and introduced Warren Angel and Rich Gottlieb from RIDEM. He also sent around a "get well card" for Paul Kulpa for the RAB members to sign. He welcomed John Vitkevitch, the newest Community Member. John said it was just 26 years ago he moved to the Newport area. He is president of the Portsmouth Business Association and is particularly interested in activities that affect the western side of Portsmouth. John is in the wireless communications business.

Captain Wyman asked if there were changes to the December RAB minutes. Hearing none, they were adopted as written.

Underscoring denotes agenda items.

OLD BUSINESS

Jim Shafer reviewed the status of site projects.

McAllister Point Landfill - The off-shore area feasibility study is under review; the final version will be issued on February 8. To accelerate the process, the Navy has issued a pre-draft version of the Proposed Plan, which discusses the cleanup alternatives studied, and identifies the methods the Navy is proposing to implement. It recommends dredging for the near-shore area and long-term monitoring for the off-shore locations. Although four copies of the pre-draft Proposed Plan were sent to the RAB through Tom McGrath, a copy is enclosed for each Community Member.

Tank Farm Five - A passive soil gas survey report has been issued, which purpose is to help determine the best location for drilling additional monitoring wells. The Navy had been operating a groundwater pump and treat system as an interim action. It was shut down a year ago because the system was pumping and treating clean water. Since the system was shut down, the Navy has collected quarterly rounds of groundwater data from the existing monitoring wells. All four rounds came up clean. Therefore, the Navy wanted to prepare a No Further Action ROD but

RIDEM expressed concern about possible contamination in the bedrock. To determine if bedrock has been impacted, new bedrock monitoring wells need to be installed and sampled. The Navy hopes to have these wells installed in the spring.

Most of the work being done at the tank farms is conducted under authority of the Underground Storage Tank (UST) program, which RIDEM oversees. However, Tank Farms 1 through 4 are also in the IR program (under CERCLA) because suspected trenches at the sites may have received sludges from tank cleaning operations. Both programs have the same goal but the UST program, because it does not require the same number of report iterations, will save time and money, and both programs are supported out of the same NORTHDIV funding source.

Derecktor Shipyard - The Navy held a meeting today to discuss comments on the draft off-shore FS. The draft final FS will be issued February 8. On-shore removal actions included the Building 42 area and the PCB area next to Building 6, which should be completed in a week. The Navy will issue a closure report once these removals are completed.

Melville North Landfill - RIDEM is reviewing a background study the Navy conducted to establish cleanup levels for arsenic. The remedial action work plan was forwarded to RIDEM yesterday. It assumes an 11.8 ppm arsenic background level. After RIDEM's review, the Navy hopes to issue the cleanup contract in February.

Gould Island - A portion of the Navy's new demolition funds may focus on sampling inside Building 32 to support the demolition activities. However, subsequent to demolition, the Navy would still have to conduct an investigation under CERCLA.

NUSC Disposal Area - A work plan was completed. The Navy is waiting for funding.

Cultural Resources Survey - A study has been completed and submitted to the state that assesses the possibility of historic ships' presence off McAllister Point Landfill, Derecktor Shipyard, and OFFTA. It concludes there may be some located off Derecktor Shipyard. Kathy Abbass was active in ensuring the study was conducted thoroughly.

Comment: What about the site-wide background study?

Response: The revised work plan has been submitted but no regulator comments have been received. Its purpose was to gather as much information as possible to aid in understanding background concentrations across the naval complex. However, RIDEM will still require that the Navy prepare a site-specific background study for each site.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning Committee - Dave Brown stated that John Palmieri and Dick Coogan attended last week's Katy Field meeting [refer to Jim Shafer's presentation on the risk results from the Katy Field sampling later in the minutes]. John and Kathy are working on the agenda for a discussion on the RAB's organization (for Community Members only), scheduled for 6:00 PM before the February RAS meeting. Dave would also like to encourage the RAB to look beyond the current Katy Field concern to upcoming milestones such as the hearing on the McAllister Point Landfill Proposed Plan. The RAB needs to think about whether the document

addresses the questions Aquidneck Islanders will pose, what individuals or groups should be educated about the plan before the hearing, and whether the RAB should take a position on the Proposed Plan before the hearing.

Membership Committee - Howard Porter announced that it has been a slow month but he has another potential community member in the wings.

Public Information Committee - Claudette Weissinger stated that the Navy has hired a contractor to assist with the Quarterly Newsletter. He will give a presentation later in the meeting.

TAG REPORT

Dave Egan listed a number of issues of concern to the TAG recipient, the Aquidneck Island Citizens Advisory Board. These include sufficient time to review the McAllister Point Proposed Plan, the application of statistics to the McAllister Point Landfill and Derecktor Shipyard studies, the base-wide background study, demolition at Gould Island, the USTs at the tank farms, Katy Field, and a method of reducing the number of review iterations for IR documents.

Comment: Why are the tank farms being investigated under the UTS Program?

Response: CERCLA is more rigorous than the UST program in its requirements for specific numbers of document reviews. Both, however, are based on addressing risk.

Warren Angel stated that the state never envisioned that tanks of the size of those at the NSN tank farms would be regulated under its program. As a result, although the Navy will only have to deal with personnel from RIDEM's UST program, RIDEM's Site Remediation program will also be reviewing Navy documents. Kymberlee Keckler expressed concern that the UST program only addresses petroleum and would not require review of the sludge pits or groundwater. There was a reason the tank farms were included in the Federal Facilities Agreement.

NEWSLETTER DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Adam Sykes, representing KPMG, which has been hired to assist the RAB with the newsletter, presented a proposal to after the newsletter development process. A handout of his viewgraphs was distributed.

The purpose of the newsletter is to present site progress and obtain feedback. Newsletter goals are to establish a process to automate and simplify issuing the document (short term) and improve both the quality of the newsletter and communication with the effected community (long term).

The proposed process would occur over a period of 1 1/2 months. Jim needs to provide a cleanup schedule update for each site and the Public Information Committee (PIC) would develop newsletter topics. The contractor would develop a draft newsletter, submit it to the PIC, and then discuss it at a RAB meeting. Comments generated at the RAB meeting would be tunneled through the PIC to the contractor, who would prepare a final draft. Melissa Griffin would review that document. She would forward it for the PIC's review; the contractor would publish and distribute the final version.

Topics the PIC already has proposed for inclusion in the next newsletter include the environmental impacts of the ships mothballed at Pier 1, how the IR program is improving the local environment, how the RAB works as a congenial team to make Accidence Island a better place, a list of absurd (humorous) ideas for use of the mothballed ships, and a description of progress made since the last RAB meeting.

Suggested improvements to the newsletter include adding three new sections: current events (on-going issues), upcoming events (future items important to the RAB), and commentary (present success stories or other items of interest).

The draft of the next newsletter will be available at the February meeting, at which time any comments on improving the newsletter will be welcome.

Comment: How does the newsletter fit in with other sources of information about upcoming IR issues?
Response: It will not become a substitute for other communication methods. The newsletter provides more general picture than other material, which usually is site specific.

Comment: Will the contractor make suggestions on the newsletter audience?
Response: The newsletter is not geared toward all Island residents and cannot be under the regulations for use of the funds. It must be targeted toward those individuals and groups who have indicated an interest in IR issues.

Comment: Does the Public Affairs Office have an existing public relations program that specifies what audiences should receive which materials?
Response: There is no specific process. Captain Wyman requested that such a "matrix" be prepared and that a "draft" version be forwarded to the Public Information Committee for its input.

Comment: A computerized mailing list was developed to distribute the first newsletter. It should be reviewed before the second edition is distributed. Warren Angel volunteered to place the newsletter on RIDEM's web page.

Comment: How many copies of the first newsletter were distributed?
Response: Approximately 500. Dave Brown suggested that a stack of copies could be left in each of the public libraries.

Comment: CERCLA decision points, such as hearings and RODS, are important. Is there a way these events can be highlighted in the newsletter? What about a column on local personalities who are involved in the site cleanup program, such as Kymberlee (a former Middletown resident), or some of the union members who do the actual cleanup work?

Comment: Some additional topics that could be included are the importance of clean water (in the context of

President Clinton's recent visit or the RAB's perspective on Katy Field.

Kymberlee stated that the original goal of the newsletter, a frequent update of site cleanup progress, seems to be getting lost as the newsletter expands. The need for a frequent status report was agreed to in a partnering session; the first newsletter was issued in June. At least two more newsletters should have been issued by now.

Comment: What did the partnering session say about the reporting process?

Response: The recommendation was that the document be modeled after the Brunswick Naval Station effort.

Comment: On what audience would Kymberlee wish the newsletter to focus?

Response: Such groups as base abutters, developers, environmental groups, and local officials.

KATY FIELD RISK RESULTS PRESENTATION

Jim described the recent Katy Field effort and distributed a one-page risk summary. Thirty-seven new soil samples were collected in November and analyzed, as requested by Senator Chafee's office. The results were added to the data collected in 1991 and 1992, and were submitted to the regulators and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) on December 22. The Navy also issued a press release announcing the availability of the data in the information repositories. The Navy will use that information to prepare a human health risk assessment (focusing on future use at Katy Field). Captain Oakleaf decided that regardless of the results of the HHRA and ATSDR's assessment, Katy Field will remain closed until all the Navy's studies have been completed, including the overall remedial investigation. The draft off-shore ecological risk assessment, which is part of the RI, will be issued on February 23. The RI/FS is due in 2001, with a record of decision in 2002.

The exposure scenarios and assumptions the Navy used for this interim risk determination were agreed to in a very productive meeting last week that involved approximately 30 people from the Navy, EPA, RIDEM (ATSDR participated by telephone) and their contractors and experts. This risk assessment only focused on recreational use, using EPA guidance, where available; RIDEM uses the classifications commercial/industrial and recreational, where recreational use is equivalent to residential use in terms of stringency. The Navy will include the residential use in its overall risk assessment, which will include data from both surface and subsurface soil. It is important to note that the Navy's overall mandate is to project the impact of the site contamination on future uses.

The results of the Navy's interim risk assessment were forwarded to the regulators and ATSDR on January 1. A conference call is scheduled for the morning of January 21 with all the agencies to discuss the meaning of the results and the message for Congressman Kennedy's Monday evening meeting. The focus of the meeting is to determine whether children exposed to site soil in the past have been adversely effected. ATSDR's health assessment of past use will be featured; that agency used different exposure scenarios and assumptions from those used by the Navy.

Jim discussed the results, which should be expressed in terms of probable additional cancer risk above the number that would be expected (in the absence of the Katy Field exposure), in the population group. Children, aged 1 to 4, who were assumed to be exposed to Katy Field contamination for 48 days per year, were calculated to be at risk for an additional three potential cancers in one million. Children aged 5 through 12 (75 days per year) were calculated to be at risk for an additional two potential cancers in one million. Adult recreational users of Katy Field (48 days) were calculated to be at risk for less than 1 additional potential cancer in one million. A lifetime user of Katy Field (over 30 years) was calculated to be at risk for 5 additional potential cancers in one million. EPA has identified a target range of additional potential cancer risk of between 1 in 10,000 (must remediate) and 1 in one million (no action necessary). Most of the Navy's results were closest to the one in the million-risk range. There were no surprises and no hot spots.

Comment: How many hours did you use to define a day in your assumptions?

Response: The hours were only used for the inhalation pathway, estimated at 5 hours per day. It is not relevant to the ingestion or dermal absorption pathways.

Warren expressed concern that RIDEM's limited recreation scenario (fenced property), would include assumptions different from the Navy's assumptions. Kymberlee expressed concern that use of 48 and 75 days was too limited. Jim emphasized that EPA management personnel two levels above Kymberlee agreed to the assumptions the Navy used. [During the comment period on the minutes, Kymberlee requested that the following text be added: "Kymberlee explained that EPA also considers the recreational scenario evaluated to be limited use and that it would be discussed in more detail tomorrow."]

Comment: As a Little League coach, I know my players would never spend 75 days a year at one field. If that is the case, can I assume these numbers indicate the field is safe?

Response: Risk decreases as fewer exposures occur. The assumptions are based on a reasonable maximum exposure level, which will help the Navy to determine if remediation will be necessary in the future. The results are favorable but we need to discuss them with the regulators. Rich Gottlieb stated that the risk numbers are merely estimates and are not a guarantee that one will be affected if at the site more or less than the assumption used in the risk calculation.

Comment: Do the Navy's assumptions include arsenic? Lead? PAHS?

Response: Yes. All of the new contaminants are included. All 37 samples came back at less than RIDEM's residential lead standard of 150 parts per million. Kymberlee stated that there was one sample at the shore that reached 168 ppm. Jim stated that the highest PAH levels were found at the barbecue area. It is unclear whether the contaminants' presence was as a result of barbecue use or fire fighting simulations.

Comment: Are the data available to the public? Are the analytical protocols used included?

Response: Yes. The material is in the information repositories. The test methods used would be specified.

Comment: Why did the Navy conduct this recent investigation when its focus really is on impacts to future site users?

Response: Because Senator Chafee's office requested that additional sampling

Comment: Has time dissipated the contamination at Katy Field into the bay?

Response: The ecological risk assessment draft due on February 23 will ask and answer that question.

Comment: Were any studies conducted at Katy Field before 1991?

Response: No, but some screening work was conducted in the early 1980s; it revealed nothing out of the ordinary.

A lengthy discussion ensued between Jim and Warren; Warren was concerned that the public would become confused hearing the Navy's conclusions when RIDEM's assumptions (including required sampling depths) and scenarios are different. The Navy's recent sampling collected soil from the surface, which had been placed as a cap years ago by the Navy as an interim measure until the new child care facility was completed. Although RIDEM acquiesced to the need for this limited recreational exposure exercise, the public may not understand that RIDEM's approval of the approach is conditioned.

Comment: It seems that regulatory agencies are "like squishy eels". Just when you think you have them agreeing to something, they raise another concern.

Kymberlee stated that there is an actionable risk for the subsurface soil at Katy Field and any remedial action for the subsurface would most likely address the surface soil, too. Because Captain Oakleaf has pledged to keep Katy Field closed; it is not necessary to resample per RIDEM's regulations.

Comment: Was the recent sampling more extensive than sampling conducted in the early 1990s?

Response: No, Its goal was to fill in sampling spacial gaps. The results were similar to results from earlier studies. Understand that the samples collected for determining whether future users of Katy Field would be at risk but the data are being used to assess past effects.

Comment: How do these results compare with past results? Response: Overall, no increase in levels was evident. Two hot spots had been identified in earlier studies. They were not found during this study. The previous hot spots might have been a result of some metal in the soil.

Comment: What do you anticipate will occur at Monday evening's meeting?

Response: ATSDR will present its findings, using the Navy's soil/sediment

Comment: Does EPA have an initial reaction to the Navy's test results?

Response: Kymberlee stated that some of the sample concentrations. She continued that arsenic, dioxin, and PAHs were the risk drivers. Captain Wyman thought dioxin had been screened out of the analysis. Kymberlee and Captain Wyman could not agree on which contaminants were screened out of the analysis and which were risk drivers. Warren recommended that the dioxin question be resolved before Monday's meeting.

Comment: The Navy hospital received 27 calls and has performed only three blood lead level tests on children. None came back with elevated lead levels.

NEW BUSINESS

Dave Brown proposed that the RAB establish a liaison for each of the three information repositories. His wife works at the Newport library. Library staff appears not to know what to do with the IR documents they receive and have no sense that anyone is interested in the material. Claudette offered to visit the Portsmouth library.

Melissa stated that the position on the Environmental Division staff that is responsible for working with the libraries has not been filled since Kevin left. She herself has taken documents to the library, only to see them dumped into a pile.

NEXT RAB MEETING

The next RAB meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 17. A pre-meeting for Community Members will be held at 6:00 PM, before the RAB meeting. The agenda for the pre-meeting [including creating a technical review committee - see below] will be included with the Community Members' final minutes.

Suggested topics for the RAB meeting include the RAB Community Members discussing their views on the pre-draft Proposed Plan for areas off shore of McAllister Point Landfill, both substantively and procedurally; reviewing the draft newsletter; and establishing a technical review committee.

Tom McGrath stated that although no notice appeared in the newspaper and no letter from the CO was sent for tonight's meeting, the Public Affairs Office has pledged to publish and send them for future meetings. The RAB charter requires 72 hours notice before RAB meetings, even if no agenda has been established.

Enclosures: McAllister Point Landfill Pre-Draft Proposed Plan (Community Members)

Agenda for the February 17 and subsequent RAS pre-meetings (Community Members)
Issues for the February 17 and subsequent RAS pre-meetings (Community Members)

Handouts:

RAS Review Dates Calendar
Newsletter Development Process
Risk Results from Navy's Kathy Field Sampling